

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing today to urge you to act now, and to act decisively, to ensure that the internet remains an open and uncensored medium and venue. In support of what is popularly known as "net neutrality", I ask that you classify or reclassify internet service & internet service providers, particularly broadband types, as 'telecommunications' services.

If the FCC does not do something forceful soon to prevent companies like Verizon, AT&T, Clearwire, MSN, Comcast, and others from controlling access to web sites (and other types of non-web, non-http links), and forcing their own sites and brands, while denying (or greatly slowing) connections to content they find objectionable for reasons of their own (which are virtually all commercial rather than any type of moral or ethical belief), then the internet will fail as the medium of the 21st century. If the internet fails then much of the economic expansion of the last 15 years will fail with it. Despite our current economic difficulties, the US has prospered over the past 2 decades, and largely as the result of computer technology, especially the internet. The potential in future for further growth in the internet arena is still enormous, in the trillions of dollars over the next 20 years.

The FCC must do this to guarantee the same freedom of access that telephone customers have long had. I rely on my internet connection to bring me news, news analysis (particularly alternate and foreign points of view in decades past I received from shortwave broadcasts and subscriptions to news weeklies), sports, weather info, and to research and make purchases of all sorts, from books to financial services, from clothing to home electronics. The internet is much more than an interactive TV news service or telephone. It is the primary source of information for literally dozens of daily activities. I found my last two jobs via an online only posting. I have made several flesh-and-blood friends from initial online chat. I found a successful treatment for a family member's illness online, information that our doctor was unaware of.

In a personal vein, I must say that having truly open, free, and uncensored access to the world from my desktop over the past dozen or so years has enriched my life and broadened my understanding. I have been able to go deeper than a few paragraphs of an encyclopedia article and learn a tremendous amount about subjects as diverse as Linux, Tibet, genomics, organic gardening, the history of printing and literacy, vacuum tubes, & meditation, to name a few among many. I made two dear friends from a first online contact, and another dear friend found the love of her life, her husband, online. The internet makes me feel a real participant in our democracy by the access I have to communicate with public officials and to learn about the issues. The internet allows me to stretch my modest income at least 10% (25% or more for some things) further than I would otherwise.

A free, open, uncensored, non-traffic-shaped/throttled internet is absolutely essential for me, and I know for many neighbors and family. Please, I urge you to act to reclassify broadband internet services as 'telecommunications' services now. The FCC must act to protect this essential, basic

service, and it must do so unambiguously and without delay.

Very Truly Yours,

William C. White  
Seattle WA 98121

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